

Report to WSCC Members on
WADE Training Opportunity &
WSCC Representation

For more information contact:
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Background:

WADE is again planning the annual training event for Conservation District Employees. George Boggs has requested an WSCC staff person to be involved in the planning of the event. Ray Ledgerwood has been asked by Mark Clark to represent WSCC. The next teleconference of the planning team is scheduled for Friday, January 13 on the following topics; training tracks, updates from track coordinators, deadlines - track information and brochure, new employee orientation session, website update, marketing WADE. Ledgerwood has made contact with the Region Managers regarding suggested topics to recommend.

Report to WSCC Members on

CD Employee's Training Needs & Experience Inventory for CD Non-Engineering Practice Certification & TSP Eligibility

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Background:

Over the past decade we have made great strides in our state to increase the numbers and skills of our conservation district technical employees. We now recognize that there is a need to better document those skills and anticipate training needs and the capability of districts to deliver technical assistance. This includes opening up another source of funding to keep qualified staff, by becoming eligible for non-engineering practice application through Technical Service Provider (TSP) agreements. It will also provide Supervisors with confidence that staff can successfully undertake and complete projects including practice "sign-off" for state cost share programs. This is a crucial inventory of existing and desired skills we are working on before going to the legislature for financial support for programs.

The overall effort is aimed at continuing our statewide development of a qualified, trained, capable, and effective conservation district workforce.

A group of dedicated individuals have worked on the inventory activity and concepts for the effort. Rich Baden, Harold Crose, Joe Holtrop, George Boggs and Ray Ledgerwood are serving on the team. Gerald Rouse has assisted the group with development of a data collection model and Frank Easter has also provided the group with technical support.

Progress to Date:

Joint Letter and Inventory Form Sent: A joint letter from Clark, Highbanks, Colvin, and Boggs was sent on December 9, 2005 with an inventory entry form and a request that District Managers would work with each of their technical employees to complete a "Training Needs and Experience Inventory for TSP Eligibility & CD Non-Engineering Practice Certification" for each position.

The completed inventory would be returned to John Larson, Executive Director, WACD and will identify the non-engineering practices for which the position should be certified to assist with planning, and/or designing, and/or applying certain practices.

The process of completing the inventory will include documentation and recognition of existing and needed capacity, utilizing NRCS assistance to document experience, training completed and in-field experience, coupled with meeting criteria from an existing practice certification program regiment used by NRCS for a district "self-certification". Supervisors were asked to support this overall effort by encouraging their district manager to work with the district's technical employees to complete the inventory sheets by January 31st.

Next Steps & Needs:

1. Develop a **Summary of the Inventory Information** received through January 31st and a listening post (WACD and/or WSCC) established to receive conservation district feedback. Share summary and feedback with WSCC, NRCS, WACD, & WADE leaders
2. Development of a **Concept Paper for March WSCC Meeting & Partner Meetings** that will request a "charge" through WSCC & Partners to continue the activity, and a specific request to dedicate staff time for the effort. Other elements of the paper could include as: a recommended process for data collection and maintenance for District Self Certification of their Technical Employees, a recommendation for requirements for technical certification on current WSCC programs, assistance for the development of Individual Development Plans in the district for each technical employee and eventually all employees; organizing training programs to specifically meet needs for non-engineering practice application, and continued development of technical expertise.